

Mallika-e-Tarranum Noor Jehan is dead

REUTERS

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PAKISTAN's 'melody queen' Noor Jehan, died in the port-city of Karachi today at the age of 72, family sources said.

Jehan, who started as an actress and singer before independence, was a contemporary of living Indian superstars like actor Dilip Kumar and Lata Mangeshkar.

Equally popular in India, Noor Jehan shot to fame because of her singing and won the Pakistani title of melody queen in 1970s.

She also won popularity in Pakistan for singing martial songs during the country's 1965 and 1971 wars with India.

Considered one of the top singers of the sub-continent, she was sometimes referred to as 'Umm Kalthoum of the region after the legendary singer of Egypt.

The official APP news agency reported Noor Jehan died in the afternoon of heart failure. She will be buried in Karachi, it said.

Noorjahan, known as the

Mallika-e-Tarannum, was a definitive diva of the 40s. A mere child, when film maker K D Mehra introduced her to the bustling studios of the pre-independence Lahore, Noorjahan first shot into limelight when movie mogul dalsukh pancholi cast her in his *Khandaan* (1942) opposite Pran.

Its success saw Noor Jehan immigrating to Bombay, bringing with her Punjabi ethos and soon she captivated the film capital with her salwar kameezes and her vibrant voice.

When noorjahan's golden larynx spun eternal classics like her *Zeenat* (1945) hit—*Bulbulon mat ro yaahan aansoo bahana hai mana*, she dethroned reigning singing star Khurshid and rendered obsolete the nautch girl style of Zohrabai Ambalewali and Amirbai Karnataka.

This singing star reached her apotheosis with mehboob Khan's blockbuster *Anmol Ghadi* (1946). Naushad's nuggets *Awaaz de kahan hai*, *Jawan hai mohabbat* and *Mere bachpan ke saathi* immortalised her.

'She filled magic in my songs and left'

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CONTEMPORARIES of Noor Jehan, thespian Dilip Kumar and veteran music director Naushad paid tributes to the singer.

Dilip Kumar, who acted opposite her in *Jugnu*, said he had no words for a great and gifted artiste of an amiable nature.

"Undoubtedly, she will remain immortal and through modern technology her voice will reverberate and echo even when is gone and no more. We all knew that she was nearing the end.

"We feel the loss all the more. I enjoin my self with those millions to who will be praying for her soul and may God receive her in choices grace and may he be generous in his reward to Noor Jehan for the Golden Melodies with which she enriched generations in India and Pakistan."

Maestro Naushad said, "I worked with her in only one film, Mehboob Khan's *Anmol Ghadi*. Mere Geeton Mein Noor Jehan apni noor bharke chali

gayee (She filled magic in my songs and is now gone)."

Naushad said he felt very sorry that the legendary singer was no more.

The noted singer had put her magical nuances in her songs '*Awaz De Kahan Hain, Duniya Meri Jawan Hai, Mere Bachpan Ke Saath Mujhe Bhool Na Jana* and *Jawan Hai Mohabbat Hasi Hai Jamaana*."

Lata Mangeshkar condoling Noor Jehan's demise said, "She treated me as her younger sister and whenever we met she used to hug me," she said.

"It's a coincidence that I first met her here and received news of her death here only," she said, adding, the news has disturbed her.

Her death has created a vacuum in the world of music which cannot be filled, she added. Lata Mangeshkar received a call from Pakistan informing her of Noor Jehan's demise.

Actor Amrish Puri, president of the Cine Artistes' Association (CINTAA) expressed condolences over the demise of the legendary singer.